

ALL IN COLOUR - MAKES LEARNING A JOY

Once Upon a Time

EVERY WEDNESDAY

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PRICE 1/-



The Water Babies

Now Tom has changed from being a naughty little chimney-sweep into a good and well-behaved water baby. He sets himself the task of finding his cruel old master, Mr. Grimes, who has been punished by being put in a prison at the Other-end-of-Nimber. Tom speaks to a policeman's truncheon at the entrance...



1. The policeman's truncheon was running along without arms or legs, but Tom was not a bit surprised. He was long past that. Since becoming a water baby he had seen many strange and wonderful sights. "I have come from Mother Carey," he told the truncheon-warden. "My job is to find Mr. Grimes and make him happy." "All right, follow me," said the truncheon. "We'll see if it can be arranged." He turned and went ahead of Tom, escorting him toward the great door of the huge prison.



2. When they came up to the closed door the truncheon knocked on it twice with his own head. The door opened and out looked a tremendous old brass blunderbuss, who was the porter. Tom started back a little at the sight of him. "What case is this?" asked the blunderbuss in a deep voice out of his broad bell-mouth. "If you please, sir, it is no case," replied the truncheon.

3. "It is only a young gentleman from her ladyship, Mother Carey. He wants to see Grimes, the sweep." "Grimes?" said the blunderbuss. "Grimes is up in chimney number 345, so the young gentleman had better go on to the roof." "How do I get up there?" asked Tom, looking up at the wall which seemed miles and miles high. But in a moment the truncheon settled that little matter.



4. It whacked round and gave Tom such a powerful push that it sent him up to the roof in no time. "Come along," the truncheon said. "But it will be of no use. Grimes is the most hard-hearted fellow we have in charge. He thinks about nothing but beer and pies, which are not allowed here, of course! They walked along over the hot roof through the many smoky and sooty-looking chimneys."



5. At last they came to chimney number 345. Out of the top of it, with his head and shoulders just showing, stuck poor Mr. Grimes. He was as sooty and ugly that Tom could hardly bear to look at him. In his mouth was a pipe, but it was not alight, though he was putting at it with all his might. "Why, it's Tom!" he said. "Have you come to laugh at me?"



6. "Keep a civil tongue in your head," said the truncheon, and it popped up just like Punch, hitting Grimes such a crack over the head with itself that his brains rattled. He tried to get his hands out to rub the place but he could not, for they were stuck fast in the chimney. "Everything's all my fault," grumbled Grimes. "But if my arms were free you'd not hit me."



7. "You may try, of course," said the ugly Fairy. Tom tugged and pulled at the bricks of the chimney but he could not move one. "You had best leave me alone," said Grimes. "You're a good-natured and forgiving little chap and that's the truth, but you'd best be off. I'm sorry for all the nasty things I've done in my life, but it's too late now." "It is never too late," said the strange fairy.



8. "Can't I help him to get out of this chimney?" asked Tom. "Perhaps I," answered a solemn voice from behind Tom. He turned round and suddenly saw Mrs. Bed-don-by-as-you-did. When the truncheon saw her it stood bolt upright — Attention! — and Tom made a low bow. "Oh, Mrs. Bed-don-by-as-you-did," said Tom. "Please may I do something to help poor old Mr. Grimes?"



9. She was right. For as poor Grimes cried and blubbered, his own tears did what Tom had not the strength to do. They washed the mortar away from between the bricks and the chimney began to crumble down. Seeing that Grimes was likely to get out of it the truncheon jumped up and was going to hit him on the head with a truncheon, when Mrs. Bed-don-by-as-you-did stopped it.



10. "Will you obey me if I give you a chance?" the strange fairy asked Grimes. "As you please, ma'am," said Grimes. "You're stronger and wiser than me. I'll do whatever your ladyship says." Grimes stepped out of the chimney and for once he looked as clean and respectable as a master-sweat should look.

11. "Take him away," said the fairy to the truncheon. "Give him a useful job to do. Get him to sweep out the crater of Mount Etna." Tom looked a little puzzled. Because he had never been to school to learn about anything he did not know at the time that Mount Etna was a large volcano in the Island of Sicily.

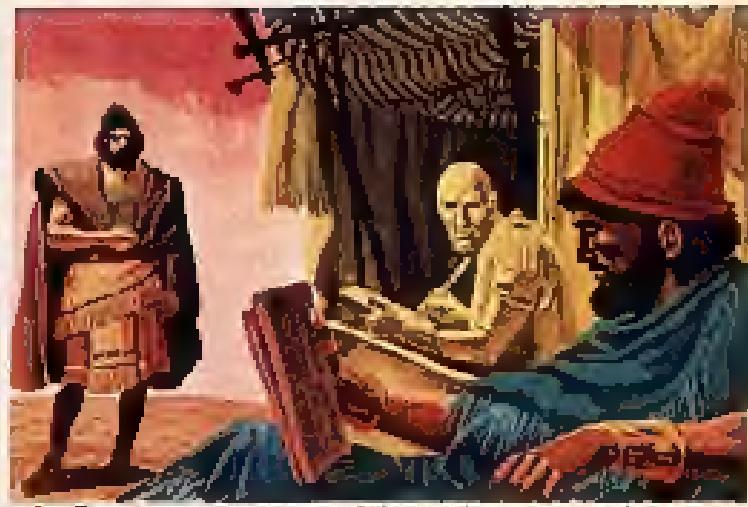
Next week, this lovely tale comes to an end and you will see what happens to brave little Tom.



1. Two thousand five hundred years ago, the Persian King Xerxes, ruler of a great empire, had a fine postal service. His postmen rode mules or camels to places as far as India and Ethiopia.



These are our "Allsorts" pages. Every week you can see all sorts of Allsorts. THIS WEEK:



2. There was no paper several thousand years ago, so letters were written on tablets of soft clay. The letters were cut into the clay with a sharp reed pen, then the clay was put in the oven and baked hard. A clay envelope might be put round it.

All Sorts of



5. The Romans ruled a great empire and they built good roads so that it was easy to travel from place to place. Horse-drawn carts carried letters and parcels all over the empire and there were staging posts, with fresh horses, along the way.



9. Two or three hundred years ago, coaches were widely used for travel. At first mail went by ordinary passenger coach but later special mail coaches were used for letters and parcels.



8. In Egypt, in the 12th century, the Moors started a pigeon post, with pigeon posts every seven miles along the routes. Racing pigeons carried express letters and each letter was sent twice, in case a pigeon was caught by hawks on the way.



10. The first air machines used to carry letters were balloons. In 1870, when Paris was besieged by the Prussians, messages were sent out of the besieged city by balloon.



3. In Egypt, several thousand years ago, the River Nile was the easiest and most important link between towns, so letters were put on boats, which carried them down the Nile from one town to another. But it was rather a slow postal service.



4. The ancient Egyptians also had a parcel post. This was taken overland by a special camel service. To make sure the parcels arrived safely, police guards travelled with the laden camels.

Ways of Sending Letters



5. In England, during the Middle Ages, only the king had a postal service, so the monks started their own post, known as the Monastic Post. Monks went from one monastery to another, carrying letters and messages often travelling many miles.



6. In Tudor times, the Public Carrier took letters from town to town. He travelled in a heavy wagon, pulled by six or eight horses. It only managed a speed of just over a mile an hour, so letters took a long time to travel any distance.



11. Nowadays letters and parcels are carried quickly and easily to all parts of the world by ship and plane, and special mail trains are used to carry letters from one town to another.



12. Today, many postmen have to be employed to deliver letters and parcels to people's homes. Postmen wear a special uniform and each one covers a certain number of streets.



BRER RABBIT

This week's story . . . The Golden Apple.

SOMETIMES when Brer Rabbit woke up in the morning he lay in bed and fell to thinking about what he would most like to do for the rest of the day. And almost always he came to the same answer . . . that he would like to find himself a field of carrots, about a mile long and a mile wide, start at one end gobbling up the crunchy carrots until he reached the other end, then turn round and gobble his way back again.

"My, my, my—what a day that would be!" he said to himself, smacking his lips and twitching his whiskers. "But here I am without a field of carrots for miles around, and a great big garden full of old grass and weeds and buttercups and daisies."

Well, there was only one thing to do about it. Brer Rabbit decided to grow his own field of carrots. Hopping out of bed, he got himself a spade.

"First dig, then sow seed, then wait and then eat!" he said to himself. "It's as simple as that!"

It did sound all very simple, but Brer Rabbit soon discovered that the ground

was hard and that his poor arms began to ache.

After ten minutes he stopped digging and scratched his left ear. "There must be an easier way than this," he thought to himself. "I must go and have a lie down and think about it."

So Brer Rabbit went back into the house and lay down on the bed. It was very nice. The bed was nice, too. The ends were made of brass and there was a round knob on each corner, which looked just like gold in the sunlight coming through the window.

Well, as you all know, Brer Rabbit is just about the featest thinker around those parts, and five minutes later he was back in the field, marching up and down and laughing all the time.

"Ha, ha, ha! I just don't believe it," he was saying out loud. "Somebody is playing a joke on me. It's just not possible. Whoever heard of such a thing?"

He said this three times and then a head popped over the fence.

"Howdy, Brer Rabbit," said Brer Fox.

"Howdy, Brer Fox," giggled Brer

Rabbit. "What a pleasant surprise!"

A second head popped over the fence.

"Howdy," said Brer Wolf.

"Howdy," chuckled Brer Rabbit.

A third head popped over the fence.

"Howdy," said Brer Bear.

"Howdy," laughed Brer Rabbit.

"What do you find so funny?" asked Brer Fox.

Wiping tears of laughter from his eyes, Brer Rabbit waved a piece of paper at them.

"Oh, I couldn't tell you—it's all so silly," he chuckled. "A golden apple tree. Indeed! Whoever heard of such a thing?"

"Well, why not let us share in the joke?" asked Brer Fox. "After all, we're your very good friends."

"Very good friends indeed," nodded Brer Wolf and Brer Bear.

"It's mighty kind of you to say so," Brer Rabbit smiled. "But I don't really like to tell you."

"Oh, go on!" growled Brer Bear. "If you don't we might stop being your friends and start thinking about rabbit pie."

"And that wouldn't be very funny," said Brer Fox.

"Nothing to laugh at at all," added Brer Wolf.

Brer Rabbit looked a little serious. "What would you say if I told you I found an old piece of paper in the loft of my house?" he said. "And what would you say if I told you a story about a golden apple tree that once might have grown on my bit of land?"

"Well, it might take our minds off tasty rabbit pie," said Brer Bear. "Tell us more."

Brer Rabbit started to chuckle again.

"It's all a silly fairy tale," he giggled. "Imagine an apple tree with three golden apples on it." He could see that they were all listening intently, so he went on: "The owner of the apple tree might have been greedy enough to say to himself, 'I'll take the three golden apples and bury them in the ground. Then they will grow into three more golden apple trees.' What a silly idea! I just can't help falling over with laughing whenever I think about it. What a joke!"

Chuckling, Brer Rabbit hopped over to a nearby tree and leaned back against the trunk to enjoy a good laugh. Of course, he was only pretending, but what happened next really did make him smile.

Brer Fox, Brer Wolf and Brer Bear raced to the shed behind the house and grabbed themselves garden tools to dig with.

Thud—push—heave! They really set about the hard ground, digging deep then breaking it up into smaller lumps, keeping their eyes fixed on it all the time.

And Brer Rabbit just sat and sat under the tree with a beautiful smile on his face and thinking all the time about lovely juicy carrots.

"You don't want to believe all you hear, my very good friends," he said.

There was no answer from Brer Fox, Brer Wolf and Brer Bear except for the noise of their digging and the puffing and huffing as they breathed.

Towards the middle of the afternoon, when the field had been dug almost up to the house, Brer Rabbit wandered indoors and lay down on his nice brass bed. It was not long before he heard a joyful shout from outside.

"Jumping Jiminy crickets, I've found one," Brer Fox cried out. "I've found a golden apple."

Then, a moment later:

"I've found one, too!" said Brer Wolf. And a moment after that:

"And me as well!" said Brer Bear.

Brer Rabbit smiled and waited. Then, for safety's sake, he jumped off the bed and stood to one side of the open window. He guessed what was coming.

"That clever young rascal Brer Rabbit has foaled us again," said Brer Fox.

And—thump, thump, thump!

Three objects came flying in through the window and landed on the bed.

"Brass bed-knobs!" yelled Brer Wolf. "That's all we found—brass bed-knobs. We did all that digging for nothing."

"That's what you think," chuckled Brer Rabbit.

The artful scamp! Now that the field had been dug over, all he had to do was to sow some seeds and wait for a crop of lovely carrots to grow. But it is not ready his fault that Brer Fox and Brer Wolf and Brer Bear had been caught out by their own greediness. After all, Brer Rabbit had warned them that it was only a "silly old fairy tale", hadn't he?

More chuckles with Brer Rabbit In Once Upon A Time next week



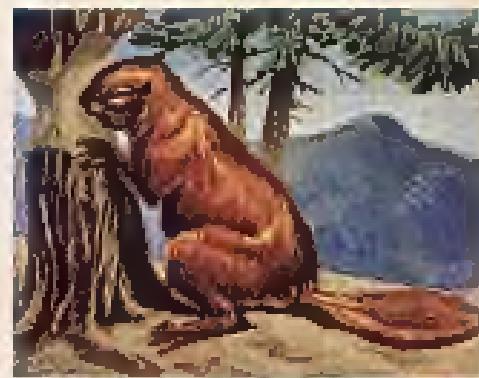
Animals with useful tails



1. Some monkeys use their tails like another hand, for gripping the branches as they move about among the trees.



2. Sea horses use their tails to anchor themselves to underwater plants, so that they will not be swept away.



3. When it is standing on its hind legs to gnaw at a tree-trunk, the beaver spreads out its broad, flat tail for support.



4. When clinging to a tree, the woodpecker spreads out its tail. The stiff feathers catch in cracks and help support it.



5. When the kangaroo rat is jumping high in the air, its long tail helps to give it the balance which it needs.



6. A crocodile needs its tail to swim. The tail acts as a propeller to push it through the water and a rudder to steer it.



7. To keep it safe from enemies, the African Pangolin curls up in a ball with its flat, scaly tail right round its body.



8. To escape enemies, young Mefish swim head down among waterweeds. Their tails look like part of the waving weed.



9. A scorpion has a poisonous sting at the end of its tail and it uses this to attack enemies, and to defend itself.



10. When food is plentiful, the fat-tailed sheep of Africa store fat in their long tails to live on when food is scarce.



11. The rabbit's white tail is used as a signal when danger threatens. Other rabbits see it and run for the bushes.



12. A dog shows it is happy by holding its tail up high and wagging it. When scolded, its tail drops down between its legs.

DIAMONDS



Diamonds are very valuable stones and for thousands of years people have been willing to pay large sums of money for them. They are found in the earth. In some places, diamonds are found near the surface. These men have dug away the topsoil and they are washing the gravel in sieves, hoping that when the soil is washed away, a diamond may be left. But most diamonds are found deep down in the earth.



Diamonds which are deep in the earth have to be mined. There are many of these diamond mines in South Africa. The rough diamonds have to be cut and polished very carefully by a jeweller and then they can be made into beautiful jewellery.



This is a Memory Test. When you have read the story, turn to page 16 and try to answer questions about it.

Journey to the South Pole

On October 20th, 1911, five men were setting out on a journey across the ice and snow of the Antarctic.

It was going to be a long and difficult journey, because they were trying to reach the South Pole and no one had ever been there before.

The leader of the party was a Norwegian, named Roald Amundsen. They had with them four sledges, piled high with provisions, and more than fifty dogs. Amundsen knew that somewhere in the Antarctic a British team, led by Captain Scott, was also setting out to find the South Pole and no one knew who would get there first.

The first day Amundsen and his party travelled along well, but on the second day there was a blizzard which made it hard to see. Then, suddenly, one of the sledges disappeared into a crevasse—a deep crack in the ice. The dogs managed to keep their footing on the surface, but the men could not pull the sledge out again. It was too heavy. So they tied a rope around one of the men and lowered him down the crevasse. He took the sledges off the sledge and tied ropes around them so that the others could pull them up to the top, until the sledge was light enough to be pulled up too.

They travelled on until they came to high mountains. The wind was bitterly cold and they had to take care that huge piles of ice and snow, sliding down the mountain, did not sweep them away.

At times there were blizzards which kept them in their tents for several days and at times their noses and cheeks froze but at last, on December 14th, they reached the South Pole.

They searched around to see if Captain Scott had been there first, but there was only bare ice and snow. Delighted at their success, they planted the Norwegian flag in the snow and set out for the return journey.

The flag was still there when Captain Scott's party arrived a month later, on January 17th. Scott and his party never reached home again, for they died of cold and lack of food on the way back. But Amundsen and his party had a good, fast journey back, with the good news that they had been the first men to reach the South Pole.



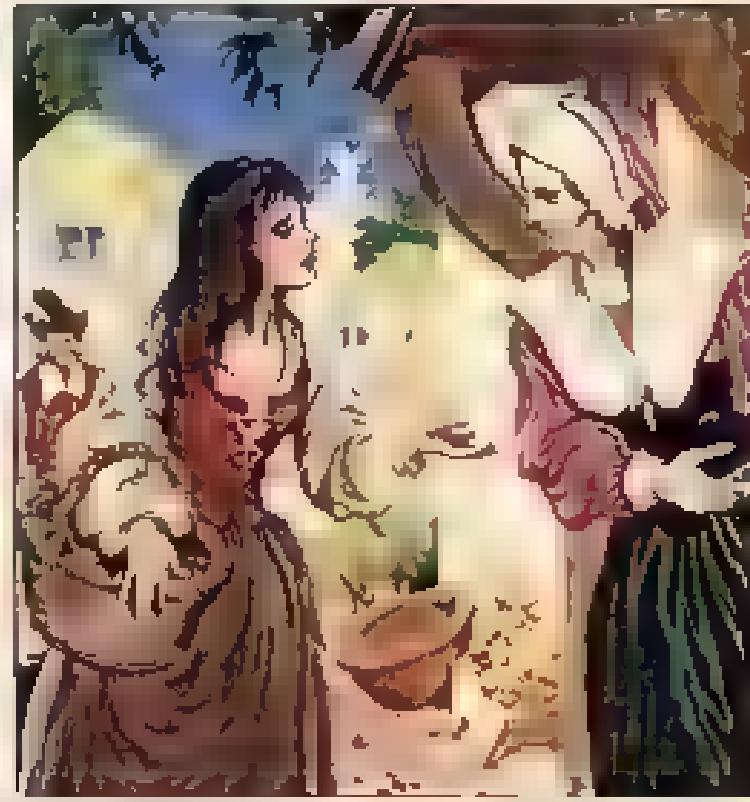
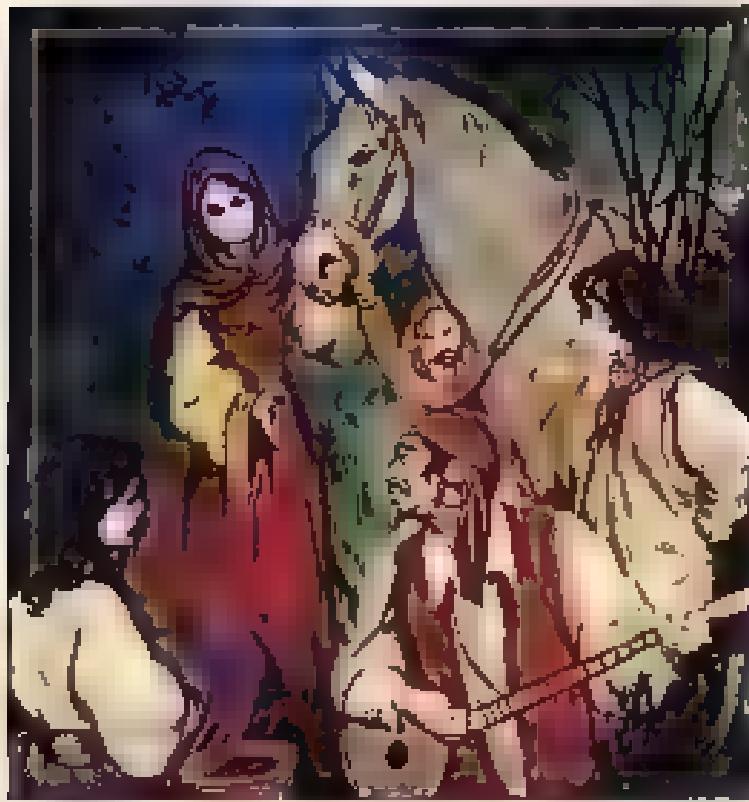


The Princess and the Gipsy



1 Once there was a lovely princess named Drusilla who had everything she wanted. One day she saw a band of gypsies pass by the window and fell in love with a handsome gipsy lad. I will marry no one but him she told her father.

2 The king was very angry. No daughter of mine shall marry a gipsy he said. You will marry the her to the king of the neighbouring kingdom and unite the two crowns. Never said Drusilla I shall marry my gipsy.

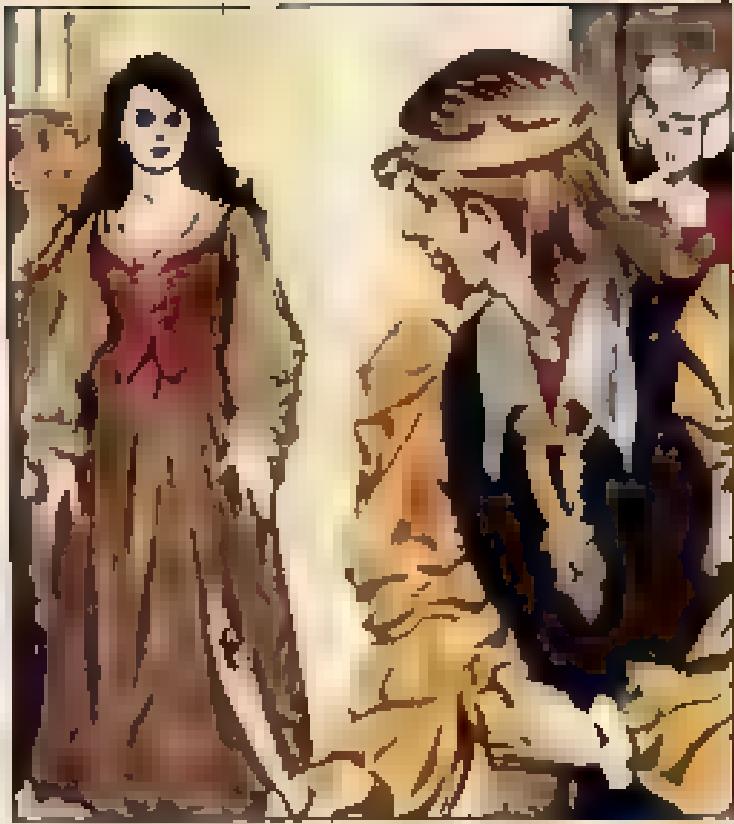


3 That night Drusilla crept from the palace and rode off on her white horse in search of the gipsy band. But when at last she found them the lad was not with them. He had stayed with the band of gypsies for only a short time and then had left.

4 The gypsies did not know who he was and Drusilla was sad, but she stayed with them in case he returned. Soon with her fine clothes in rags and her long hair untidy she looked just like any gipsy selling wares from house to house.



5. One day a noble lord from her father's court was riding past and saw Drusilla. He recognized her as the lost princess. Drusilla recognized him too but before she could escape he seized her. "Remember your father is here for her and givens her you," he said. "Come home with me." At this the other gypsies quietly stole away and there was no one left.



6. Drusilla went back to the palace with the noble and the king was overjoyed to see her. "I shall arrange for your marriage to the prince," he said. "I do not want to marry," said Drusilla stubbornly. "None does he but he will and so will you," replied the king and preparations were made for a great ball at which Drusilla was to meet the prince.



7. "Marry her? We'll see about that," thought Drusilla as she dressed for the ball. By when she entered the ballroom a great surprise awaited her. There, dressed in fine princely clothes, was the handsome gypsy lad she had seen from her window and whom she was in love with.



8. Drusilla asked the prince for an explanation and he told her that miserable at the thought of marrying an unknown princess he had joined the gypsies for a last taste of freedom. Drusilla told him of her adventures. He quickly fell in love with her and they were married and lived happy together.



The Brave Countess

The Story of a Beautiful Painting

In the year 1205, the Turkish army captured the city of Jerusalem and for many years their armies from Christian countries tried to defeat the Turks and regain Jerusalem. These wars were known as the Crusades.

In the year 1189 the Third Crusade was begun, led by Frederick Barbarossa, Richard the Lionheart of England and Philip Augustus of France.

Very soon, throughout France, the noblemen were gathering together men from their estates to join the French army. One of these noblemen was Jean de Vernais, a French count whose big house was deep in the heart of the vineyards.

Every year the grapes were gathered and soon his wine was famous throughout France. The nobleman who owned the neighbouring estate was very jealous of Jean de Vernais' good fortune and was constantly planning how he could possibly gain posse-

sion of the rich estate.

When the Third Crusade began, de Vernais' neighbour pleaded that he was much too old to travel all the way to Jerusalem to fight the Turks, as he did not go.

But Jean de Vernais and most of his trusted workers set off with their King, Philip of France.

Jean de Vernais was married to a very brave young woman who told him not to worry about the estate. She promised to see that the grapes were gathered just at the right moment and that the wine was safely stored in casks in the deep, cool cellars of the big house.

The jealous neighbour waited until the young Count was far away and then one dark night he sent his men to the de Vernais' estate, to capture it.

He felt quite sure that a woman could not possibly hold out against his well-armed men.

But as matter how hard his men fought, the Countess and her workers fought even harder. Finally the old nobleman surrounded the house and tried to starve them out.

Unfortunately for him, he had left his attack too late, for the Third Crusade was over and Jean de Vernais and his men returned to France. The old nobleman was defeated and King Philip of France, when he heard the story, gave the old nobleman's estate to de Vernais.

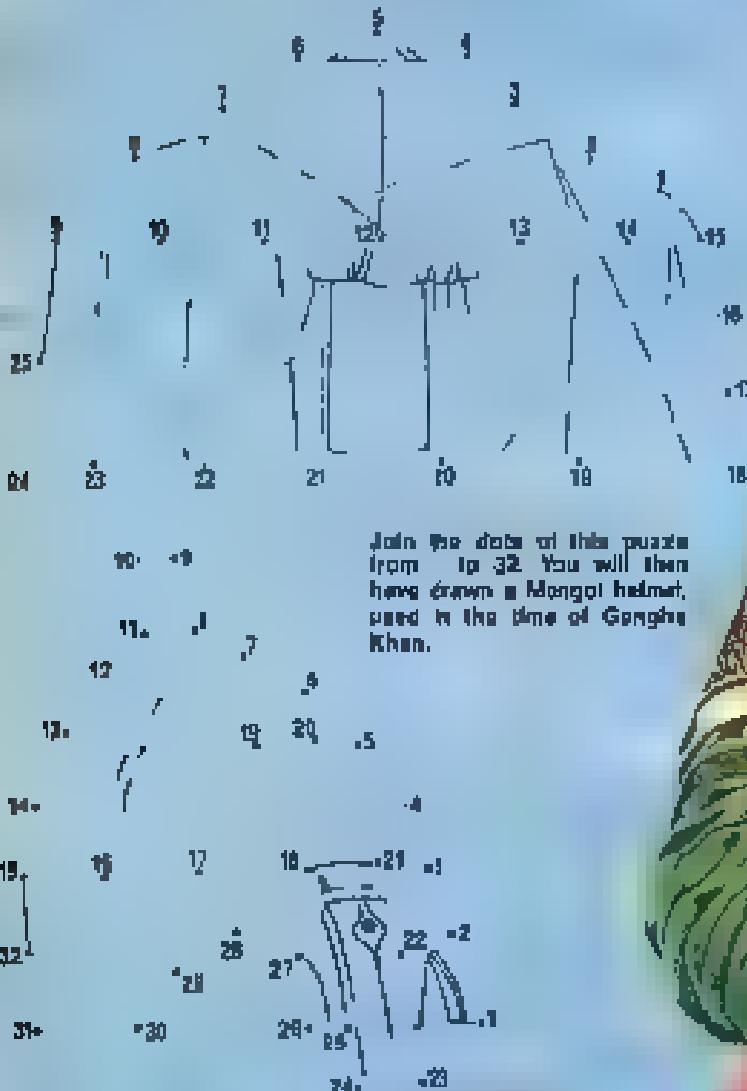
It was a very proud day indeed when the Count de Vernais set out for Paris with his wife and children to receive the deeds of the estate from the King himself. Our artist's picture shows the joyful journey.

The Countess had to travel in a wagon, for she was very weak from lack of food. During the stage, the brave woman had given her own bread to keep her children alive, but she happily became well again.

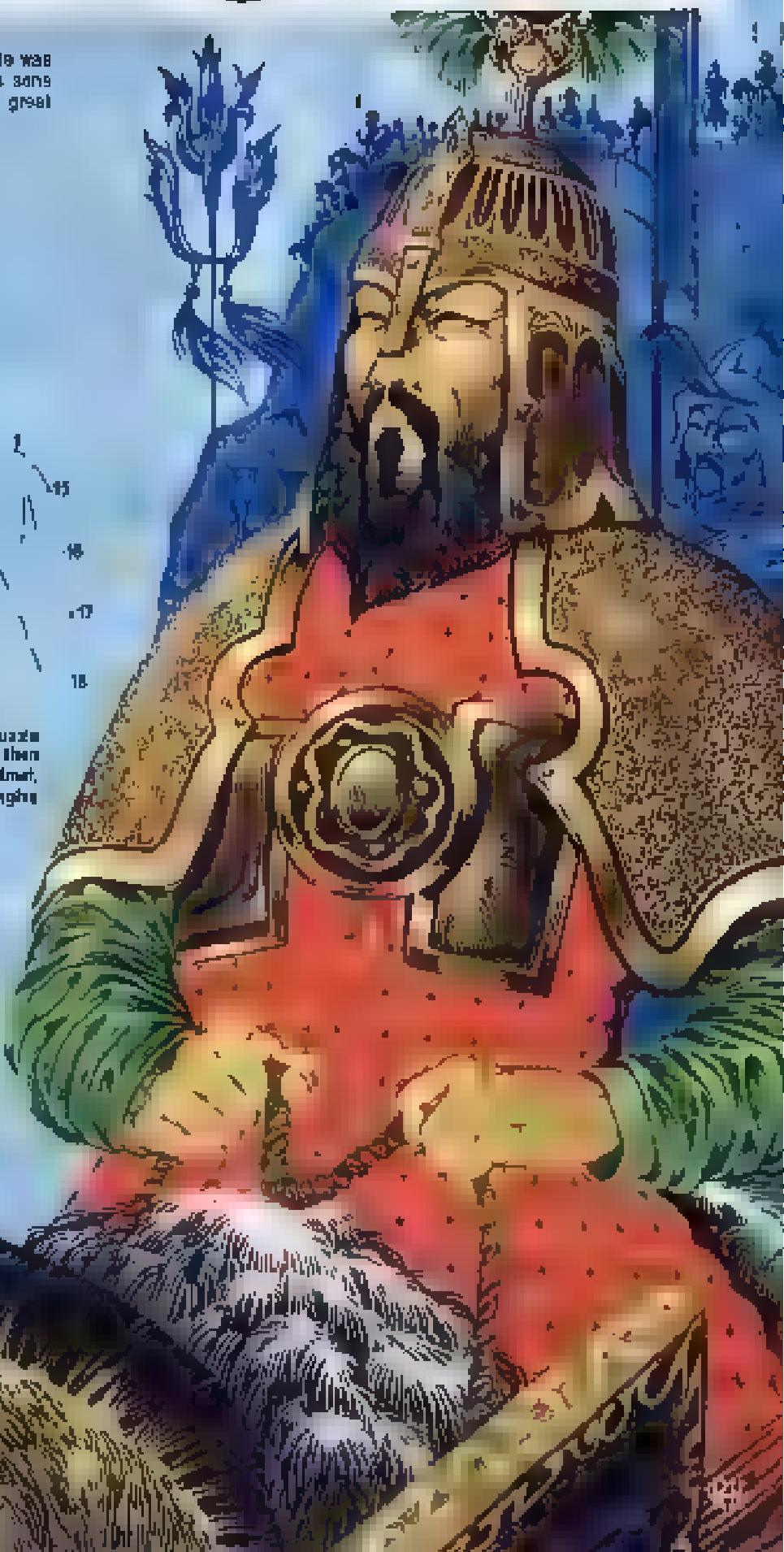
The Great Genghis Khan

Genghis Khan lived about seven hundred years ago. He was a very famous and great Mongol warrior. He and his sons conquered all Asia and most of Russia and built up a great empire.

People of Mangala live in big
huts made of camel-hair cloth.
By joining the dots of the
people pictures below from 1
to 25, you can draw one of
these strange human.



Join the dots of this puzzle from 1 to 32. You will then have drawn a Mongol helmet, used in the time of Genghis Khan.





Rex the Wrecker causes trouble again. By Barbara Hayes.

CRASH! Splinter! Splinter! That was the sound of a farmgate being kicked open by little Rex the Wrecker and all pieces of wood being knocked off the gate and rolling to the ground.

WUMP

Crunchity! Crunchity!

The Wump was the sound of Rex kicking over a box of eggs and the crunchiness-crunchy was the sound of him walking all over the eggs and breaking them.

Do you remember Rex the Wrecker? He is the naughty little mouse who lives over Whinfred the country mouse, and who breaks everything that he touches.

Whinfred says that Rexie can break things just by looking at them.

Rex's mother says he is just unlucky.

But Bertie, Whinfred's boy-friend, says that Rexie is a horrid little chap who gets into mischief deliberately just because he likes it.

Anyways one cold day during last Winter when an icy wind was blowing over the countryside over the Wrecker decided to go and visit Bertie working on the farm where he earned his living.

Well as soon as Bertie heard the CRASH! Splinter! Splinter! of the gate being kicked open and the WUMP! Crunchity! Crunchity! of the eggs being broken he said to himself "Is Rexie the Wrecker at coming this way or is he not?"

Well Bertie didn't have to eat his hat, because of course it was Rexie.

Bertie called Rex the Wrecker "What are you doing, Bertie?"

"Call me Mr. Mouse. If you don't mind," replied Bertie, who didn't like Rexie much. "If you must know, I'm putting salt on all the farm paths, so that they will not get frozen and slippery."

He was very pleased.

"Does salt stop things from freezing?"

them?" he asked.

"Yes," said Bertie.

"And is that salt you've got in that big sack?" went on Rexie.

"Yes!" answered Bertie. "And now run along out of here, Rexie. You've done enough damage for one day."

And Bertie turned his back on Rexie which was a very big mistake.

Because as soon as Bertie's back was turned, Rexie picked up a bucket and took a bucketful of salt out from the sack of salt.

Then he walked across to the other side of the farmyard looking for something on which he could put some salt. Taking big handfuls of the salt and throwing it about did look such fun.

It was just unlucky that some full churns of milk were standing by the gate ready to be collected by the milkman.

"I know," thought Rexie. "I will stop the milk from freezing by putting salt into it. No one likes frozen milk, so will be doing everyone a good turn."

Now Rexie knew in his heart of hearts that no one likes salty milk either and that he was being naughty by putting the salt into the milk, but he just thought to himself, "If anyone tells me off I will pretend I didn't know that salty milk was nasty."

So Rexie took the top from one of the milk churns and was just going to pour in a handful of salt when Mr. Whinfred, the country mouse, came into the farmyard.

"Rexie, you naughty boy stop that!" she called.

To tell the truth, she wasn't really sure what Rexie was doing, but, knowing Rexie, she guessed it must be something naughty.

And when Bertie heard Whinfred's voice, he ran towards Rexie waving a broomstick and shouting "Wait till I get

my hands on you!"

But Rexie didn't wait.

He ran back home as fast as his legs would carry him.

"Mummy," he said. "Everyone is grumbling at me, just because I was trying to do something helpful."

And his mummy gave him a scoldie.

But I hope Rexie the Wrecker never comes round to my house and tries to help me.

Would you like him to help you?

There will be another story about the mice to make you chuckle next week.

Here are the questions about the story "Journey to the South Pole" on page 10. How many can you answer before reading back to the story?

1. Where were the party of Norwegians going?
2. What did the Polar bear eat?
3. Who was the leader of the Arctic party?
4. Who reached the Pole first?
5. What did they plant at the Pole?

YOUR EDITOR'S LETTER

Dear Boys and Girls

Like you, I am enjoying the lovely story of the Wrecker, which has been appearing for several weeks in Once Upon A Time, and I think it was when it was first on the market. "Grown-ups don't you? Do you know a kind thing of which you are not?" It's a nice feeling to have done something, so why not try to do one every day?

Your Friend, The Editor

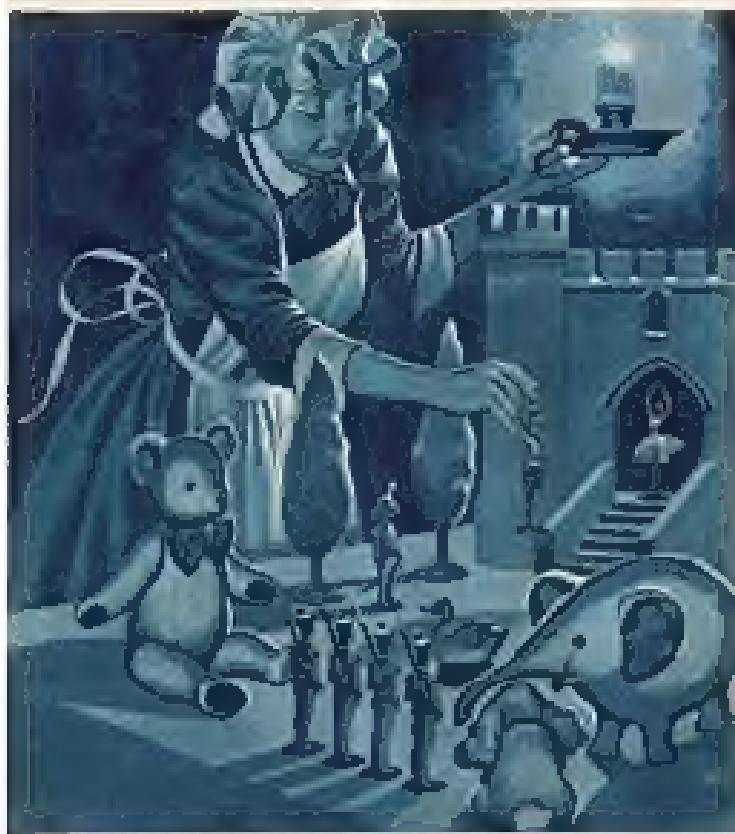


The Tin Soldier



1. The tin soldier, who had been swallowed by a big fish, was most uncomfortable, for there was no room to move and it was very dark, far darker than it had been when he was sailing along the underground gutter. However, he lay, clutching his moustache with all his might and straight as ever. The fish swam around for a time. Then it made some wild jerking movements and lay still.

2. After what seemed a very long time, the soldier saw a gleam of light! Then suddenly a voice said: "Why, it's a tin soldier!" Some-one was lifting him out of the fish's inside and he was in daylight once more. The fish had been caught and bought by a cook who was now busy preparing the dinner. The soldier was discovered when the fish was cut open.



3. The cook picked the soldier up and took him into a room where some people were gifting. They were surprised to see a soldier who had travelled in a fish's stomach. The soldier was even more surprised to see that he was back in the room where his adventures had all begun, with the same toys and the same children. The cook put him down on the table with the others.



4. There was the same grand castle and the lovely little dancer was still standing in front of it, poised on one leg, with the other raised in the air. The soldier was pleased, for he could see that she had missed him very much all the time he was away. He and the dancer looked at each other, but they never said a word. Still, the soldier was delighted to be back.



5. At first, the little boy who owned all the tin soldiers was delighted to have his missing soldier back again and played with him happily enough, but then, perhaps in a sudden fit of temper, he picked up the soldier and hurled him into the fire. It might even have been the wicked little goblin who put the boy up to it, for he had no idea why he did it.



6. The tin soldier found himself standing in a blaze of light. The heat was very fierce, but the soldier did not know whether it was the heat of the fire or the glow of his love for the little dancer which he felt. As he looked at her, still standing on the table, he felt that he was melting away. All his bright colours were fading, but he still stood up straight.



7. Just then, a door was opened. There was a sudden draught of air which picked up the little dancer and carried her, as if she were a flying fairy, right into the fire. She landed at the side of the tin soldier and burst into flames. In a few seconds she was gone, while the tin soldier melted away more slowly.



8. Next morning, the servant girl began to clean out the fireplace, ready to light the fire again. There, in the ashes, she found all that was left of the tin soldier—a tiny heart of tin. And beside it was a bit of blackened metal from a dancing dress, which was all that was left of the little dancer.



The WISE OLD OWL Knows all the answers



1. Do Siamese cats come from Siam?

"Siam used to be the name of a country in Asia, and it is now called Thailand. Many centuries ago, these rather special cats were bred there. The first pair of Siamese cats to be seen in Great Britain arrived in the year 1884 from the Royal Palace at Bangkok, the capital city of Siam."



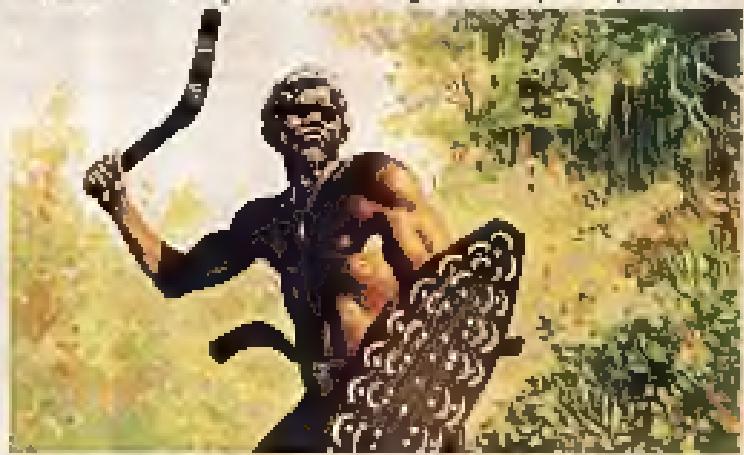
2. What is an ox-bow lake?

"Rivers often twist and turn as they flow towards the sea, cutting new channels for the water to flow in. Sometimes the channel forms a loop, which becomes flooded with water and makes a lake. The new lake that is formed is called an ox-bow lake and the picture above shows you what one looks like!"



3. Why does a boomerang fly back to whoever throws it?

"All over the world many great cathedrals have been built. The name given to them comes from an old Greek word, 'kathedra', which means something that can be sat on. The word cathedral means a church with a throne, for a bishop or archbishop to sit on."



4. How did a cathedral get its name?

"Boomerangs were once weapons with which the first natives of Australia killed creatures for food or defended themselves from enemies. These did not return to the thrower, but the 'play' boomerang, which is curved and has a flattened side, is forced by air resistance to take a curving path and return."



5. Why is it so easy to skate on ice?

"You may wonder why we can skate on ice but not on other smooth or highly-polished surfaces. The reason is that a steel skate causes friction, which causes heat, and forms a thin film of water. This film of water lets the steel move very smoothly."